

COMBINATION CRAPS AND ROULETTE GAME

CROSS-REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATIONS

This application is a conversion of provisional patent applications
5 60/221,904 filed July 31, 2000; 60/230,254 filed September 6, 2000; and 60/238,149
filed October 6, 2000.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

1. Field of the Invention

The present invention relates generally to games, more particularly, to a
10 combination craps and roulette game and a mini-roulette game as well as a gaming
wheel for use therein.

2. Prior Art

Craps and roulette have been known as forms of gambling for
centuries. All major casinos as well as smaller gambling venues have some form of
15 these two gambling games, generally played on large gaming tables. The basic rules
for craps and roulette are well known to even non-gamblers. Roulette uses a rotating
gaming wheel having numbered and colored slots. If a player picks (bets) a
number/color of a slot that a rolled ball falls into, that player wins. The player wins
differing amounts depending upon the statistical odds the casino pays for such a bet.
20 Craps involves the throwing of dice and betting on the outcome of the dice.

Typically, the types of gamblers who frequent the craps and roulette
tables in casinos are very different. Craps players are typically the more sophisticated
gamblers and typically bet larger amounts while roulette is generally favored by the
less sophisticated gamblers for its simplicity. Very often a married couple will be split
25 between the craps and roulette table in a casino, one being intimidated by the
perceived complexity of craps, the other being turned off by the perceived lack of

excitement of roulette. Therefore, the two gamblers spend most of their time at a casino separate and neither gambler is introduced to the game of the other.

5 Lastly, casinos are always looking for ways to make the most efficient use of their floor space and to introduce new games that will entice the public into their casinos.

In view of the prior art, there is a need for gaming tables in which both craps and/or roulette can be played simultaneously and which introduces a type of gambling that the participants would not ordinarily be interested in. There is also a need in the art for gaming tables which minimize the amount of casino floor space
10 needed.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

Therefore it is an object of the present invention to provide a combination craps and roulette game in which craps and/or roulette can be played simultaneously.

15 It is a further object of the present invention to provide a combination craps and roulette game in which participants on one of the two games are introduced to the other game.

It is yet a further object of the present invention to provide a combination craps and roulette game which allows groups of people playing both
20 craps and roulette play on the same gaming table.

It is still yet a further object of the present invention to provide a combination craps and roulette game as well as a mini-roulette game which makes for efficient usage of casino floor space.

Accordingly, a combination craps and roulette game is provided. The
25 combination craps and roulette game comprises: a game surface, the game surface having indicia thereon for displaying bets for both craps and roulette; and a wheel having a plurality of slots, each of the plurality of slots corresponding to a face of at least one die, the wheel also having means for retaining and directing a rolled ball such that the rolled ball comes to rest in one of the plurality of slots.

In a preferred implementation of the combination craps and roulette game of the present invention, each of the plurality of slots corresponds to each of a possible combination of faces of a pair of dice. Furthermore, it is preferred to provide an additional slot corresponding to the number zero.

5 In a more preferred implementation of the combination craps and roulette game of the present invention, the plurality of slots are color coded based on the combination of faces of the pair of dice to which it corresponds. Preferably, any combination of faces of the pair of dice which is less than seven is color coded in a first color, any combination of faces of the pair of dice which is greater than seven is color coded in a second color, and any combination of faces of the pair of dice which is seven is color coded in a third color. The first color is preferably red, the second color is preferably black, and the third color is preferably white. In the case where a zero slot is added, zero is color coded in a fourth color, preferably, green.

15 The combination craps and roulette game of the present invention is preferably in the form of a casino gaming table.

Also provided is a wheel for determining a winner of a bet. The wheel comprises: a plurality of slots, each of the plurality of slots corresponding to a face of at least one die; and means for retaining and directing a rolled ball such that the rolled ball comes to rest in one of the plurality of slots. The wheel preferably is configured as previously described with regard to the wheel of the combination craps and roulette game.

20 Still yet provided is a roulette game comprising: a game surface, the game surface having indicia thereon for displaying bets for roulette; and a wheel having a plurality of slots, each of the plurality of slots corresponding to a face of at least one die, the wheel also having means for retaining and directing a rolled ball such that the rolled ball comes to rest in one of the plurality of slots.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

These and other features, aspects, and advantages of the apparatus and methods of the present invention will become better understood with regard to the following description, appended claims, and accompanying drawings where:

Figure 1 illustrates the combination craps and roulette game of the present invention in the form of a casino gaming table.

Figure 2A illustrates a first preferred layout of a game surface and wheel of the combination craps and roulette game of the present invention.

5 Figure 2B illustrates a second preferred layout of a game surface and wheel of the combination craps and roulette game of the present invention.

Figure 2C illustrates a preferred layout of a game surface and wheel of a mini- roulette game utilizing the wheel of the present invention.

10 Figure 3 illustrates a preferred layout for the slots of the wheel of Figures 2A and 2B.

Figure 4 illustrates the possible combinations of a pair of dice.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENT

15 Although this invention is applicable to numerous and various types of gaming devices, it has been found particularly useful in the environment of a gaming table for use in a casino. Therefore, without limiting the applicability of the invention to a gaming table for use in a casino, the invention will be described in such environment.

20 Referring now in detail to Figure 1, a combination craps and roulette game in the form of a casino gaming table is shown therein, the game being referred to generally by reference numeral 100. The combination craps and roulette game 100 has a game surface 102. The game surface 102 is fabricated from conventional materials known in the art, such as felt. The game surface 102 also has indicia 104 printed, silk-screened or the like thereon. The indicia displays bets for both craps and roulette as will be discussed below. The game 100 also has a wheel 106, similar to
25 wheels known in the art for use in roulette games. However, unlike conventional roulette wheels, the wheel 106 of the combination craps and roulette table 100 of the present invention replaces the numbers usually found thereon with the 36 possible combinations of a pair of dice.

30 Referring now to Figure 2A, the wheel 106 of the combination craps and roulette game of the present invention is shown in more detail. Generally, the

wheel 106 includes a base 108 and a rotatable upper portion 110 which rotates relative to the base 108. The upper rotatable portion 110 has a plurality of slots 112. Each of the plurality of slots 112 corresponds to a face of at least one die, and preferably to all possible combinations of faces of a pair of dice. All such possible 36 combinations are illustrated in Figure 4. The wheel 106 also has means for retaining and directing a rolled ball such that the rolled ball comes to rest in one of the plurality of slots 112. The means for retaining and directing the rolled ball are well known in the art and only a brief description is therefore presented. Generally, the wheel includes an open annular slot in which the ball is rolled. Upon losing velocity, the ball falls into the region of the wheel 106 containing the slots 112, eventually coming to rest in one of the plurality of slots 112. The wheel 106 is shown centered on the game surface 102 in Figures 1 and 2A. However, it is shown in such configuration by way of example only and not to limit the scope of the invention. Those skilled in the art will realize that the wheel 106 can be positioned anywhere on the game surface 102 or on a separate surface independent from the game surface without departing from the scope or spirit of the present invention.

Referring now to Figure 3, there is shown a dice section 114 of the wheel 106 which is adjacent the slots 112. The dice section 114 has indicia corresponding to the dice combinations for each of the slots 112. Preferably, in addition to all of the possible combinations of faces for a pair of dice, the wheel 106 also has a slot 112 corresponding to a zero (or double zero as is used in some countries). A zero slot is used to provide another bet for the players and in some instances for manufacturing economy, since a 37 slot wheel is more commercially available than a 36 slot wheel. Those skilled in the art will recognize that a zero slot can be omitted without departing from the scope or spirit of the present invention.

As clearly seen in Figure 3, all 36 combinations of faces of a pair of dice are displayed on the dice section 114 along with a zero position 116. Preferably, the plurality of slots 112 are also color coded based on the combination of faces of the pair of dice to which it corresponds. The color coding of the slots and corresponding dice section adds yet another bet for players.

Preferably, any combination of faces of the pair of dice which is less than seven (2-6) are color coded in a first color, such as red. Any combination of faces of the pair of dice which is greater than seven (8-12) are color coded in a second color, such as black. Any combination of faces of the pair of dice which equal seven are color coded in a third color, such as white. Lastly, zero is color coded in a fourth color, such as green.

Referring back to Figure 2A, a preferred game surface 102 of Figure 1 is shown in more detail. The game surface 102 is supplied with indicia 104 displaying both bets for craps and roulette. Once players place their bets by placing chips (or having casino personnel place their chips) on an appropriate indicia 104, the wheel is spun and generally no further bets are allowed. Each spin determines the winners and losers of the roulette portion of the game, while several spins may be necessary to determine the winners and losers of the crap portion of the game.

In the craps portion of the game, any bet that is available in a conventional craps table is available in the combination craps and roulette game 100 and all odds are the same. For instance, a craps player can play Pass 118 or Don't pass 120, back of the Pass line, Boxes, Any Craps 122 (designated by AC), Horn 124, individual craps numbers, Hardways 126, or individual (7) or (11). A roulette player can play any one or multiples of (0, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, or 12) with the odds of that number being spun being displayed over the number that is being played. For instance, a bet of "2" has odds of 30-1. All indicia 104 which is available for a roulette bet is indicated with the word "Roulette". An "Any Craps" bet is also a roulette bet (one bet will cover the three numbers 2, 3, and 12 and will receive odds of 7-1). In addition, a roulette player can bet either red or black.

If a zero is spun, color bets lose. A zero bet is said to have "action" in the roulette portion of the game which means that all bets besides colors (red/black) have a free pass. Thus, spinning a zero has bearing only on those who bet zero and those who bet red or black. All plays of roulette are one time spins of the wheel 106. Since there are more than one combination of the numbers for roulette (except 2 and 12), the odds are lower on the combination craps and roulette game 100 than on a

conventional roulette table. However, a player has more opportunity to win on the combination craps and roulette game 100 of the present invention than on a conventional roulette game. An alternative game surface 102a is shown in Figure 2B. The alternative game surface 102a has only one set of indicia 104 whereas game surface 102 has a set of indicia 104 on both sides of the wheel 106. While game surface 102 allows more participants in the game, game surface 102a can be made smaller, thereby minimizing the need for casino floor space.

In summary, as is evident to those skilled in the art, the combination craps and roulette game of the present invention allows users to play craps, to play roulette, or to play both simultaneously, on the same table. The main difference between craps on a conventional craps table and on the combination craps and roulette game 100 of the present invention is that the rolling of dice is eliminated. However, a craps player will have the same choices of bets as he or she has on a conventional craps table. The combination craps and roulette game of the present invention replaces the dice of craps with a wheel from roulette. However, the numbers on a conventional roulette wheel are replaced with the 36 possible combinations of a pair of dice. As discussed above, a zero is also preferably included on the wheel. Both the craps and roulette bets are designated on the game surface 102 along with their corresponding odds.

Referring now to Figure 2C, where like numerals refer to like features, there is illustrated yet another game surface 102b for a gaming table, referred to as mini-roulette. The mini-roulette game also makes use of the wheel 106 described above. Game surface 102b includes only indicia 104 for roulette. Thus, it can be used to play roulette according to the ordinary rules of roulette but with the numbers of the dice being the numbers that can be bet upon. Those skilled in the art will realize that because the possible numbers on a pair of dice are much less than the amount of numbers on a conventional roulette wheel, the game surface 102b and therefore, the gaming table, can be made much smaller than conventional roulette games.

The wheel and game surfaces discussed above are illustrated and described herein as being a physical embodiment by way of illustration only. Those of

skill in the art will realize that "wheel" and "game surface" as used in the present invention also contemplates electronic representations thereof which can be generated on a display screen, such as in an electronic game. Of course, in such an embodiment, the "slots" and "rolled ball" are not physical embodiments but electronic

5 representations thereof.

While there has been shown and described what is considered to be preferred embodiments of the invention, it will, of course, be understood that various modifications and changes in form or detail could readily be made without departing from the spirit of the invention. It is therefore intended that the invention be not
10 limited to the exact forms described and illustrated, but should be constructed to cover all modifications that may fall within the scope of the appended claims.